

## How to Spot Fake News: A Simple Guide

### 1. Check the Source:

Verify the credibility of the website or publication. Established news organizations are more likely to provide accurate information. Reliable news sources typically have standard domain names (e.g., “.com”, “.org”, “.eu”, “.edu”). Depending on the country the news source is based in, these can be named accordingly (“.kr” for South Korea, “.nl” for Netherlands etc.). Be cautious of unusual domain extensions (e.g., “.com.co”) or websites that show a lot of ads and pop-ups – note that official news websites may also feature ads but considerably less. Check for an “About” page or contact information and look for a professional layout and minimal errors in spelling and grammar. In order to verify information, cross-check with other news sources that you would deem trustworthy.

Note that websites like “Koreaboo”, “Allkpop”, “Soompi” or “Pannchoa” are not considered reliable sources as they report unconfirmed information, gossip and rumors as facts, usually with a “clickbait-y” headline, and frequently seem to show bias in their reporting (see also 3.)).

### 2. Look Beyond the Headline:

Headlines can be misleading; they are designed to grab attention but may oversimplify or exaggerate the story (“Clickbait”). Read the entire article to understand nuances and full context. Check if the article provides data, quotes and detailed information to back up its claims. Analyze the language: sensationalist or emotionally charged language can indicate bias. Determine if the article aims to inform, entertain or provoke a reaction. Be aware that some articles or news are designed to contain disinformation (= false information which is intentionally spread, e.g. propaganda) which can then also result in misinformation (=false information unintentionally spread); the key here is intent and to refrain from spreading it further. Find out more about the difference between the two terms:

<https://www.dictionary.com/e/misinformation-vs-disinformation-get-informed-on-the-difference/>

### 3. Investigate the Author:

Look into the author’s credentials and reputation. Review their other articles or publications to determine their reliability and bias and check if they have any affiliations (e.g. companies, organizations, political parties, etc.) and understand that these may influence the author’s perspective.

### 4. Evaluate Supporting Sources:

Ensure the information is backed by reliable sources. Look for detailed and well-supported evidence rather than vague references and make sure quotes and data are not taken out of

context or misrepresented. Note that primary sources (original documents) are more reliable than interpretations or analyses.

#### 5. Check the Date:

Make sure the news is current and relevant. Be cautious of older articles that may no longer be accurate – this can be due to new developments or changes in circumstances. Older news might still be relevant to understand context but should not be mistaken for current events.

#### 6. Consider if It's Satire:

Some sites publish satirical content; recognize well-known satire sites like The Onion that publish satirical articles which use humor, irony or absurdity to make a point. Playful or sarcastic tones are an indicator that the content is meant for entertainment and not serious reporting.

#### 7. Assess Your Biases

Be aware of your own biases and how they might affect your judgment. Reflect on your own beliefs and how they may influence your interpretation of information. Exposing yourself to different viewpoints may help get a well-rounded understanding of an issue. Apply critical thinking to evaluate information objectively, regardless of personal biases: this means to question the validity and reliability of information and base conclusions on logic and evidence rather than emotions. While everyone is welcome to have an opinion, do not confuse personal opinions as facts.

Source and more detailed information: <https://library.csi.cuny.edu/c.php?g=619342&p=4376665>.